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300908Z Aug 01

2001HANOI02139 - CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION EAP-00

INFO LOG-00 NP-00 ACQ-00 CIAE-00 INL-00 USNW-00 DOTE-00
DS-00 EB-00 FAAE-00 FBIE-00 VC-00 TEDE-00 INR-00
VCE-00 NEA-00 NSAE-00 SA-00 DSCL-00 NFAT-00 SAS-00
/000W

-----18BBCE 301022Z /38

FM AMEMBASSY HANOI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3821
INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY BEIJING
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY DHAKA
SECDEF WASHDC
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L HANOI 002139

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP/BCLTV, INR/EAP, NEA/IAI,
SECDEF FOR ISA/EA/LSTERN

E.O. 12958: DECL:08/30/11

TAGS: PREL PINS PINR KPAL IS VM

SUBJECT: ARAFAT RECEIVES SRV SUPPORT

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¶1. (U) CLASSIFIED BY ROBERT C. PORTER, CHARGE D'AFFAIRES,
REASON 1.5(D).

¶2. (C) SUMMARY: A BRIEF VISIT TO HANOI BY YASSER ARAFAT
ON AUGUST 24 WAS APPARENTLY AIMED AT SHORING UP SUPPORT
FOR PALESTINIAN POSITIONS IN THE WAKE OF ESCALATING
VIOLENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. VIETNAM REAFFIRMED ITS
GENERAL SUPPORT AND EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE VIOLENCE,
BUT BROKE NO NEW GROUND. END SUMMARY.

¶3. (U) YASSER ARAFAT STOPPED IN HANOI ON AUGUST 24 AS
PART OF A SWING THROUGH ASIA, DESCRIBED AS AN EFFORT TO
GATHER SUPPORT FOR PALESTINIAN POSITIONS. HE APPARENTLY
HAD ONLY ONE OFFICIAL MEETING, WITH SRV PRIME MINISTER
PHAN VAN KHAI, WHO REAFFIRMED THE SRV'S POSITION THAT THE
PARTY, STATE, AND VIETNAMESE PEOPLE WILL CONTINUE THEIR
LONG-STANDING SUPPORT FOR THE PALESTINIAN POSITIONS,
INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO HAVE AN INDEPENDENT STATE.
ACCORDING TO LOCAL PRESS COVERAGE, KHAI ALSO CONFIRMED
SRV SUPPORT FOR UN RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 338 AND EXPRESSED
CONCERN OVER THE ESCALATING VIOLENCE. VIETNAM
TELEVISION, IN ITS AUGUST 24 NEWS SUMMARY, CRITICIZED THE
BUSH ADMINISTRATION FOR ITS SUPPORT OF ISRAEL.

¶4. (C) MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS WESTERN AFRICA AND
ASIA DEPARTMENT DEPUTY DIRECTOR DOAN NGOC BOI DESCRIBED
ARAFAT'S DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER AS FRIENDLY
BUT DID NOT OFFER MANY DETAILS. HE NOTED THAT THE SRV'S
SUPPORT FOR ARAFAT AND THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE IS LONG-
STANDING. BOI COMMENTED THAT THE SRV IS ESPECIALLY
CONCERNED ABOUT ISRAEL'S USE OF HEAVY WEAPONS IN CIVILIAN
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AREAS UNDER THE PRETEXT OF SECURITY. HE STATED THAT THE
PALESTINIANS WERE READY FOR PEACE AND IT WAS UP TO ISRAEL
TO MAKE ADDITIONAL CONCESSIONS. BOI ALSO CHARGED THAT
THE US WAS "BIASED" TOWARDS ISRAEL. HE ALSO NOTED THAT
ARAFAT SEEMED PESSIMISTIC AND CONCERNED AND HAD MENTIONED
THE NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS.

¶5. (C) BOI ALSO DESCRIBED ISRAEL-VIETNAM RELATIONS AS
"NORMAL" AND SAID THAT NEGOTIATIONS FOR A BILATERAL TRADE
AGREEMENT ARE PROCEEDING. HE ADDED THAT HE DID NOT
EXPECT VIETNAM TO OPEN AN EMBASSY IN ISRAEL WITHIN THE
NEXT 5 YEARS, HOWEVER.

¶6. (C) ISRAELI AMBASSADOR AMIKAM LEVY TOLD POLOFF AUGUST
29 THAT THE ENTIRE ARAFAT VISIT OCCURRED AT THE HANOI
AIRPORT AND LASTED ONLY ABOUT ONE HOUR. HE ADDED THAT
ARAFAT HAD VISITED VIETNAM AT LEAST 10 TIMES IN THE PAST

AND KNOWS THAT HE WILL ALWAYS BE WARMLY RECEIVED HERE.

17. (C) COMMENT: ARAFAT'S BRIEF VISIT TO HANOI APPEARS NOT TO HAVE BROKEN ANY NEW GROUND BUT ONLY FURTHER DEMONSTRATED THE LONG-STANDING SYMPATHY AND GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SRV AND THE PALESTINIANS.
END COMMENT
PORTER

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